DEPARTMENT OF STATE CONFIDENTIAL
UNCLASSIFIED
REVIEWED BY VWOLF JR DATE 5/25/82
RDS☐or XDS☐EXT. DATE
TS AUTH. REASON(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED☒ RELEASABLE☒
RELEASE DENIED☐
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

137
138
~~GEH~~
WMR
~~EXT~~

Alexandria, Egypt, October 18, 1951

Memorandum of Conversation between

H.E. Mahamed Hassan Youssef Pasha, Chief of the Royal Cabinet,
H.E. Ambassador Jefferson Caffery, American Ambassador to Egypt,
Mr. Robert Simpson, Second Secretary of the American Embassy at Cairo, and Mr. Ferguson.

Hassan Youssef Pasha repeated to the Ambassador that he still felt the proposals should not have been made by the four Governments last week, that they should have been presented at a later time. Youssef Pasha added that frankly he had been disappointed by the proposals themselves, since he had assumed they would go beyond the Bevin proposals of 1947 and instead they had not gone as far. He saw no improvement at all over the 1947 proposals. The Ambassador pointed out that we were now prepared to join in defense arrangements and that was a distinctly new element. Youssef agreed, but he was interested almost exclusively in the evacuation of British forces and he could not find any reference to evacuation in the points presented to the Government last Saturday.

He reminded the Ambassador that he had asked to see the proposals in advance, and that had he seen them he could have said they would not be considered satisfactory. As the conversation proceeded, it became clear that Youssef Pasha had interpreted the proposals as giving Egypt only one vote out of 5 (and possibly 1 out of more than 5 if the Commonwealth countries were included) with respect to the following points:

1. The British troops to be withdrawn after the bases became allied bases, and

2. The number of non-Egyptian troops to be stationed in the future at the allied bases.

I said that I was sure he had misinterpreted the language of the proposals, and we looked at a copy he had with him to see the exact language. I told him that when the proposals said that these matters were to be determined with Egyptian "agreement" that was precisely what was meant; the British forces that remained at the bases would be those Egypt agreed should remain and those non-Egyptian forces stationed there in the future would also be in numbers agreed to by Egypt. I emphasized that the proposals recogniz[illegible]cipal that Egypt was a

DECLASSIFICATION DATE 6/25/78
PER VE/IGLES OFFICE NEA
72015

UNCLASSIFIED
FOR SECRET

UNCLASSIFIED

sovereign country with the right to determine the extent to which non-Egyptian forces would be stationed in her territory. I said that when it was said Egypt would be an equal member, we meant an equal member. I then went on to say that of course if there were to be genuine defense arrangements for the Middle East, Egypt would have to recognize the defense needs of the whole area, and should actively join in the arrangements if she intended to play a real part in the mutual interest.

Youssef had quite obviously read the proposals in the light of his suspicions of British motives and British tricks, and he said the proposals had not been stated in a way which the Egyptians could have accepted. He was, however, very pleased at what I had told him was the interpretation. I said that it was too bad there had been no opportunity to discuss the proposals, since many of these worries his Government had apparently had could have been explained. The Ambassador said he realized the problem which worried Youssef; the Egyptian Government felt it had to have something clearly stated on the subject of evacuation.

Youssef agreed with the Ambassador, and said he felt that something might be done in the future if there could be a phased withdrawal of British forces (which he repeatedly referred to as being very much in excess of those permitted by the 1936 treaty) and the substitution of Egyptian troops. He said the Egyptians had already agreed the British could keep 5000 technicians at the bases to maintain them. I told him that the general interest of all of us in the defense of the Middle East might make it wise to have more forces than the 5000 technicians stationed at Suez, but he said he did not think that was the case at the present time.

Youssef Pasha then told us that he was very interested in our arrangements with Turkey. He wanted to know whether we had a treaty or a gentleman's agreement. He wanted to know how many American military personnel we had in Turkey and what their rights and functions were. He said the King felt that Egypt could do whatever Turky had done, and he wondered if we could get the agreements we had with Turkey so he could show them to the King.

The Ambassador and I assured him that these agreements were available, that there was no treaty, and that we had very full cooperation from the Turks in all respects. Youssef made a remark that suggested we had developed our relations with Turkey over several years and that Egypt would like to start out as Turkey had.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

We pointed out that in many ways the situation were not comparable and that, of course, the arrangements with Egypt would differ in many ways, but that he could be assured we recognized the same principles with respect to the sovereign rights of Egypt as we did in the case of Turkey or any of the members of NATO. I said that with respect to the stationing of troops in another country and their rights there, it might be useful for him to see the way these things were handled in France, for instance, since much the same arrangements would be made with Turkey, when Turkey's formal admission to NATO occurred. He still seemed interested only in Turkey, saying Egypt could do as much as Turkey.

Youssef Pasha then said again that he really believed an explanation of the proposals would be helpful, that he had felt the British just wanted to coerce Egypt, not to evacuate the "occupation" troops. He thought if the proposals in fact mean that Egypt would have the right to determine the troops to be stationed on her soil, then the proposals could be discussed after a while; it was hopeless to attempt to do so at the moment.

Youssef then mentioned the Sudan and said how important it was to settle this problem. The Ambassador and I both said that the Sudan should not be linked to the defense arrangements. We told him that Egypt had a difference with the British over the Sudan, but it was not a problem on which the Turks, for instance, could be expected to negotiate. The Ambassador stressed the need for separating the proposals, saying that he realized they were linked in the Egyptians' minds but not because of any logical relationship between the two.

Youssef then said that the Egyptian Parliament had "settled" the question of the Treaty and the Sudan, that these things were now "accomplished". He seemed to feel, that, since Egypt had sounded off and declared her position, the two issued could now be separated if the British didn't do something foolish (he made some remark about the possibility that the British might send forces "back" into Egypt from the Sudan). The Ambassador told him that we could certainly help both parties to move toward a solution, but there were channels for working out the Sudan issue which were not the ones required to work out the defense arrangements. He added that we could help effectively only if the issues were kept separate.

UNCLASSIFIED

TOP SECRET

UNCLASSIFIED

Youssef concluded the conversation by telling us that the King had refused to agree to the adjournment of Parliament until the "Fortunes" bill was passed. He said the Parliament was going to pass the bill. He also said that the King had signed the law abrogating the 1936 Treaty and would sign the law declaring him King of the Sudan, but that he would not sign the others at the present time. He mentioned that the King was anxious to maintain order and that he had already spoken sternly to the Minister of the Interior about the disturbances in the Canal Zone.

John H. Ferguson

UNCLASSIFIED
TOP SECRET